To W. L. Garrison

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Syracuse, Oct. 16. 1862

My very dear Friend

Several weeks ago I agreed upon an exchange next Sunday (the 19th inst) with Mr Savary of West Newton. At the same time I was informed by him that Mr Slack would like to have me supply the pulpit at Music Hall, the Sunday after Oct 26th. But I have heard nothing from Mr Slack upon the subject, although I wrote to him a few days afterwards in order to be sure that he would depend upon me. I will now thank you to see him before next Sunday, and if he does expect me to preach in Music Hall on the 26th inform him that I shall not be able so to do.

All my arrangements were made to leave home last Monday — I spend three days in Brooklyn N. Y. with the Unit. Ministerial Convocation and proceed thence to Boston to remain for a visit of a couple of weeks to my friends there.

But Sunday before last my little grandson Freddy was taken sick with scarlet fever. He was very sick all last week, and

is still in such a condition as to require constant watching. Moreover last Sunday our servant woman fell sick of the same or a kindred disease and is not yet well enough to go out doors.

Of course, I could not have come, and wrote to Mr Savary to that effect. And I have just passed my ~~visit~~ for several weeks. ——

I long more than ever to see you and confer with you on the aspect of our country and the signs of the times. I begin to apprehend that if the neck of this injurious rebellion be not broken before the 1st of January, we shall find the plot against the life of our Republic a deeper laid and wider extended one than we have hitherto suspected. Why this reinforcement of our army on the Potomac? Why the countenance of Buell in his insignificant position? Why is the blockade of so many of our southern ports so inefficient? What means this increase of active cooperation with the Rebels by the people of England — and the accumulation of so large a French army in Mexico? I wonder at every moment's delay on the part of our Government

in showing the world that we mean to
crush this rebellion = that we can
crush it = that we have crushed it.
The only explanation, of the predica-
ment we are in, is, I fear, that some
of the men who are in positions of the
greatest responsibility have more sym-
pathy with slaveholders than with free
laborers. My hopes have declined, and my
spirits have been much depressed with-
in the last few days.
But I now see more clearly than ev-
er that war is not a means appoint-
ed or approved of God for the redress
of wrongs or the maintenance of civil
or religious freedom. It is a coarse, clum-
sy, cruel, complicated contrivance to
attempt what can only be done by mor-
al, religious, spiritual instrumental-
ities. Nay, it is the awful consequence
which nations bring upon themselves
and each other, by neglecting in due
time to exterminate those social vices,
those political wrongs, which are incom-
patible with the enjoyment of human
rights, political unions, peace. Nearly
eighty years ago Mr Jefferson said Slav-
ery must be abolished, it will be abolish-
ed, if not by the generous energy of our

own minds, it will be abolished by the awful processes of a civil & servile war! More than thirty years ago, you and the Societies you founded & repeated pretty much the same admonition. But the rulers & scouted the truth and the common people were persuaded & to kill the messengers and stone those that were sent to save them.

There was a time, yes, a long time, from the adoption of the Constitution, until 1820 when the Churches and Ecclesiastical powers might, easily, have abolished Slavery peaceably, if they had been minded so to do. But they would not, and lo! their's their horrible retributions, their direst of all national calamities has come upon us. Say not it is the way in which the Lord would have had us remove their evil from our midst. No! no! he has left us to our own devices.

Do write me, and anger somewhat better than my fears, if you can.

Give my love to Helen and Aunt Charlotte and all your loved ones, and believe me as warmly as ever

Your friend and brother

Samuel J. May.

Enclosed I send a likeness of Mr Wilkinson to Aunt Charlotte